

County shows off its diversity of businesses



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WHITEHALL □ More than 50 Washington County businesses and nonprofits filled Whitehall Athletic Club on Thursday for the Washington County Business Showcase.

It was the third time the county's Local Development Corp. and Tourism Department hosted the event, and the relationships between those businesses have continued to grow.

"It's really my favorite part," said Deanna Derway, president of Washington County LDC and event organizer. "I really like watching those connections take place."

Laurie LaFond, president and director of Friends of the Washington County Grasslands Important Bird Area, said the connections she made last fall, when the event was held in Greenwich, translated into thousands of dollars worth of services and a lasting and continuing relationship with the engineering firm C.T. Male Associates.

"They donated their site design on the Alfred Z. Solomon Bird Viewing Area," she said. "They're continuing to help us move forward until the project is complete."

Friends of the IBA items can be found for sale at the Times Emporium in Whitehall, whose owner, Marge Mohn, set up a table at the event for her store and for the nonprofit Arts and Recreation Community of Whitehall.

Mohn said the networking at the event is unmatched, with a wide variety of industries participating.

She hopes the relationships she is making can help make more things happen, such as bringing a welcome center to Poultney Street, just inside the New York border with Vermont.

"There's 14,000 people that cross here every day," she said.

Promoting local products, along with I Love New York tourism items and information, would be possible at the center.

Two local product makers — Susan Knapp, owner of Slyboro Ciderhouse, and John McDougall, owner of Lake George Distilling Co. — held a meeting before the event got started.

Their working relationship has continued to grow.

Slyboro Ciderhouse, which began in 2005, is part of the 100-year-old Hicks Orchard in

Middle Granville.

Lake George Distilling Co. is much newer to the scene, having launched in September 2013.

Knapp said the boom in craft beverages is exciting.

When she, along with co-owner Dan Wilson, opened the ciderhouse, they were one of a handful of commercial cider producers in the Northeast.

Today, she said, there are more than 300 in the country.

Both Knapp and McDougall are included on the Adirondack Craft Beverage Trail and Map developed and promoted by the Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Knapp noted the growth locally has been so rapid, "New ones were popping up before the map even came out."

Derway said she is seeing growth in many industries across the county, which was represented in the diverse offerings Thursday.

"This really is a slice of Washington County. We have a little bit of everything," she said.